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*Finish and Care of*  
**SOUTHERN**  
**YELLOW PINE FLOORS**

*Specification and Design Information and  
Data for the Use of Architects  
and Engineers*

Technical Bulletin No. 2.

*Southern Pine Association*  
Architectural and Engineering Service Department  
NEW ORLEANS ~ LOUISIANA

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# *Southern Pine Association*

## FINISH AND CARE OF SOUTHERN YELLOW PINE FLOORS

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### SELECTION OF FLOORING

THE merits of Southern Yellow Pine Floors are conceded and they compare favorably with any other flooring in common use. When properly laid and finished, they possess durability and beauty which recommend them for use in the residence, the commercial or the industrial building. The system of lumber inspection maintained by the Southern Pine Association is highly efficient and purchasers of Southern Yellow Pine flooring are assured of getting recognized standard grades from retailers who sell the products of Association mills. The things which insure this quality flooring are stands of hard, dense-growth, Southern Pine timber; careful selection of kiln-dried stock; close attention to details and processes of manufacture; correct piling and storage at the mill and lumber yard in dry sheds; careful grading and regrading at the mill; shipment in closed cars, insuring protection from the weather; careful handling from the moment of manu-

facture; proper care at the building site to protect it from damp conditions which cause the absorption of moisture; and finally proper methods of laying and finishing in the building followed by intelligent care after installation.\*

That Southern Yellow Pine flooring commends itself to the expert, the building manager and the home owner is evidenced by its ever increasing popularity and use in the moderate-priced as well as the most expensive houses and club buildings and in the best types of modern business structures. A properly finished Southern Yellow Pine floor is something that gives with its low cost, the satisfaction that goes with a substantial and beautiful part of a home. It has in addition, an element of freshness and life which is distinctly a novelty in many localities and parts of the country where this wood is not native and withal its durability and richness of effect insure service and satisfaction.

\*See Bulletin No. 1 of this series for grades and methods of installation.



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## HOW TO FINISH SOUTHERN YELLOW PINE FLOORS

### SCRAPING

In kitchen and service rooms, rift-sawed Southern Yellow Pine Floors may be dressed off or scraped and left plain, without any other finishing. Generally, however, some special treatment is desired to make it harmonize with the interior finish of the room. When the laying of the floor is completed, and just before the painting contractor is ready to treat the floors, the carpenter should scrape the surface, in the same manner as hardwood floors are scraped, with a handscraper. When machine scrapers are used, all close and otherwise inaccessible spaces must be hand-scraped. The floors should be sandpapered and thoroughly dusted after the scraping is completed, leaving an even and smooth surface ready for the painter. Until the first coat, applied by the painter or floor finisher is dry, no walking or work on the floor should be allowed.

### NATURAL VARNISH FINISH

The most popular finish of Southern Yellow Pine floors is made by varnishing the scraped floors, producing a beautiful golden-glow effect which brings out with great distinctness the beauty of the quarter-sawed or flat-grain characteristics of the wood. The surface, thus treated, presents a mirror-like finish, glossy and very rich in its effect and not slippery. The painter should dust and clean off the floor, making sure to wash off or otherwise remove any soiled spots, before starting his work. All cracks or checks which appear in the surface should be filled with

approved paste filler, but if the floor is properly laid, no filling will be required. First apply a coat of the best white shellac, brushing it with the grain of the wood and allow it to thoroughly dry. Follow this with two coats of first-class floor varnish in natural color. Ample time for thorough drying must be allowed between the coats of varnish. The base shoe or quarter-round moulding at the base should be varnish-finished the same as the floor, regardless of the finish of the base board proper.

### STAINED VARNISH FINISH

A less expensive finish is often used for large floor areas which consists of a first coat of thin floor varnish mixed with an oil stain or pigment of any color or tone desired. When dry, it is covered with one or two more coats of clear floor varnish as may be required. If a filler is necessary to conceal defects, it should be colored to match the stain before using.

### OIL STAIN FINISH

Southern Yellow Pine floors may also be stained in the same manner as that applied to interior trim and doors to develop the contrasting beauty of the dark and high lights of the wood. The general directions given for the varnish finish apply in this case also, except that the first coat by the painter should be an approved brand of linseed oil stain thinned with turpentine, benzol, or solvent naphtha. It is desirable to apply a preparatory coat of one part pure linseed oil to three parts pure turpentine before staining to insure an even tone effect. The stain is applied by

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brushing it with the grain of the floor strips and wiping it off with pieces of cloth as the work progresses in order to bring out the beauty of the grain of the wood and to eliminate laps, unevenness in color, and brush marks. The color and the shade should be specified by the architect and the painter should provide sample boards for approval before beginning the finish work, as may be required. The filling of cracks or defects when required, should be as previously specified, the filler being colored to match the stain. The stain should be coated with white or orange shellac according to the effect desired and the floor finished with two coats of floor varnish.

The stained finish is particularly adapted to flat-grain pine floors. When selected for its special figure, flat-grain flooring makes an interesting and quite unusual floor.

## WAX FINISH

Another method of finishing the floors after scraping, is to apply two coats of white shellac which is finished with floor wax rubbed in with a weighted brush such as is used for this purpose.

It is generally conceded, however, that Southern Yellow Pine floors are better finished with varnish than with wax; but, if desired, the gloss of the varnished finish can always be reduced by treating the surface with floor wax and a weighted brush.

## PAINTED FINISHES

Less expensive finishes are made by using oil and lead paints or thinned floor varnishes mixed with pigment. These finishes are especially adapted to the wider floor strips or

floors that are not scraped to a smooth surface.

Fill all open joints with a paste filler and apply a good ground coat of thinned lead and oil paint to make a flat and not glossy finish. Over this, brush on a coat of good varnish stain, either walnut, mahogany, early English, or whatever color is desired. This finish is very durable and satisfactory and is particularly recommended for old floors or any floor that cannot receive a finer finish. The ground coat color must harmonize with the color of the varnish and it will show through the transparent streaks of the varnish stain and produce the effect of "figure" or grain in the wood. One coat of varnish stain or colored varnish over the ground coat will be sufficient. The brush, in all cases, should be applied with the grain of the boards and the stain should be applied to three or four strips at a time for the full length of the room and so continued until the entire floor is covered. The brush can also be so manipulated by the painter as to produce the appearance of grain in the wood, if a less monotonous effect is wanted.

Old or new floors may also be painted by applying a first or second coat of flat paint thinned with turpentine or benzol and then applying two or more coats of standard exterior gloss finish paint. A floor made of edge-grain narrow boards, scraped smooth and painted, has a surface with little or no joints showing which, in appearance, resembles waxed linoleum.

## PROTECTION

The finishing should always be done under favorable weather conditions. Good ventilation is necessary, but no excessively cold or



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warm drafts of air should be permitted to strike any freshly varnished surfaces. Never finish over a wet surface or during wet weather. The finished floors should be protected with strips of red rosin-sized building paper until the building is delivered to the owner.

All varnishes for floor finishing should be hard, but durable and elastic, especially manufactured to withstand the hard usage of floors. These are always marked "floor varnish," and are readily obtained everywhere from responsible varnish manufacturers.

## HOW TO CARE FOR SOUTHERN YELLOW PINE FLOORS

### CLEANING POLISHED FLOORS

It is easy to keep a Southern Pine floor in perfect condition indefinitely, the only requirement being some proper attention when needed. Like other high-grade floors, a Southern Pine wax-finished floor should be newly waxed once a year, rubbed with a padded brush, preferably weighted. If unusually severe usage wears the finish down to the wood, an additional coat of wax should be applied to the worn areas and thoroughly rubbed. After all, it is not the lumber in the floor which should withstand the wear, but it is the finish on its surface; and therefore this finish should be kept in good condition.

Waxed or varnished floors should not be cleaned with water. It is permissible to wipe the surface with a cloth dampened in tepid water, but all dampness should be taken up immediately with a dry cloth. Ordinarily floors can be effectually cleaned by wiping up with a dry cloth and the occasional use of a

weighted floor brush alone or with a piece of carpet placed beneath it as a pad.

R. S. Kellogg, in his book, "Lumber and Its Uses," gives the following recipe as "one of the best for keeping a floor in good condition:"

"Equal parts of sweet oil, turpentine and vinegar, well mixed, and rubbed on the floor with waste or a cotton or woolen rag. The vinegar will cut the dirt or grime worked into the finish from shoes; the sweet oil produces a luster, and the turpentine promptly dries the moisture. The above mixture need not be applied oftener than once a month to insure a floor finish that will resemble the sheen of a piano."

### CLEANING VARNISH FINISH

If the varnish finish has become badly worn, give the floor a good scrubbing with a brush, a good cleanser and water. Do not flood the floor. Remove all surplus moisture at once and after the surface is thoroughly dry, rub with OO sandpaper and apply a thin coat of varnish. In extreme cases where the abrasion of the surface has been unusually severe, two coats of varnish will be necessary.

### CLEANING SHELLAC FINISH

If water has been spilled on the floor, turning it white in spots, moisten a soft cloth with a little denatured alcohol and lightly rub the spots which should immediately disappear.

Do not neglect your floors until the finish is worn down to the wood. Attention given at the right time will maintain the floor surface indefinitely.



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## CLEANING STAINED FINISH

If the stained and varnished finish is permitted to become badly worn, it will be necessary to refinish the entire surface either by removing the old finish with paint and varnish remover and cleaning with benzine or by applying a new ground coat over the old finish resulting in a lighter effect. The second method will obliterate the grain of the wood, in which event the natural grain can be imitated, if desired, with a graining roller and comb.

## SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

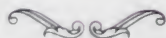
FLOORS are subject to severe conditions of usage and their permanent protection is a serious problem. Except where specifically directed, a good grade of elastic floor varnish is more desirable than shellac for a filler or first coat. It is not recommended that either oil or wax alone be used to finish Southern Yellow Pine floors.

The important thing in painting or staining Southern Yellow Pine is to properly thin the first coat so that it will give penetration and spread on the wood. As an alternative treatment to prevent trouble from pitch that may be present in the wood, or to obviate any ten-

dency of the heartwood and sapwood to take the stain unequally, apply a light, preparatory coat of one part of pure linseed oil and three parts pure turpentine. If blistering of paint occurs from excess sap in the wood, from damp foundations, or from the use of improper paints, it is best to scrape or burn off the blistered paint and to reprime with a thin coat of pure white lead mixed with one part linseed oil to three parts turpentine.

Wherever wood floors are subjected to excessive moisture which is likely to occur over unventilated damp spaces under porches or when moisture condensation may occur upon the underside of the flooring from any cause, the absorption of the moisture is almost certain to cause blistering and peeling of the paint. In such circumstances it is recommended that the underside of the flooring as well as the tongue-and-grooved edges of the boards be protected with paint or chemical preservative before installation.

The aim of the Southern Pine Association is to insure the proper application of this wood for the purposes and uses for which it is best adapted and where it will give the most economical and satisfactory service. Its architectural and engineering service department will gladly assist with advice as to materials and methods best adapted to special requirements.



THE SOUTHERN PINE ASSOCIATION'S  
Action in behalf of making Lumber  
buying safe and simple receives distin-  
guished consideration

HERBERT HOOVER,  
SECRETARY of COMMERCE:

*There is no reason why conscientious grade-marking of lumber should not be as successful as the grade-marking of other products manufactured on the basis of different qualities. The grade-marking of lumber seems to be particularly important because, unlike any other article, the quality of which can be analyzed, the grading of lumber largely depends on judgement founded upon long experience. It is therefore evident that the consumer often is at a loss to know whether he is actually receiving the quality for which he has paid and which he wants. Without grade-marks on lumber it is easily seen that grades may be mixed unintentionally. The plain indication of grade on each piece of lumber protects consumers as well as distributors.*

*Grade-marking will also reduce waste. Correctly grade-marked lumber can be bought and sold without necessitating actual inspection. In other words, if the grade-marking is carried out in a conscientious manner, lumber will be bought and sold unseen, as wheat or any other commodity, the various qualities of which have been definitely determined. This will reduce the cost of distribution and stabilize lumber conditions.*

*Through grade-marking practices the public will be educated in the various grades of lumber and in their correct and most economical uses.*



⑦ SPA-3.COM ~ ⑦ SPA-B&BHTB ~ ⑦ SPA-2.E.G. ~ ⑦ SPA-MERCH ~ ⑦ SPA-B&B ~ ⑦ SPA-C.E.G. ~ ⑦ SPA-B&BHT ~ ⑦ SPA-2.COM ~

⑦ SPA-MERCH ~ ⑦ SPA-SESS ~ ⑦ SPA-B&BHT ~ ⑦ SPA-2.E.G. ~ ⑦ SPA-B&BHTB ~ ⑦ SPA-3.COM ~

TRADE-MARKED



GRADE-MARKED

SOUTHERN YELLOW PINE

⑦ SPA-C ~ ⑦ SPA-2.COM ~ ⑦ SPA-3.COM ~ ⑦ SPA-1.H.T. ~ ⑦ SPA-B&BHTB ~

⑦ SPA-1.COM ~ ⑦ SPA-2.COM ~ ⑦ SPA-3.COM ~ ⑦ SPA-4.COM ~ ⑦ SPA-C ~ ⑦ SPA-B&BHTB ~ ⑦ SPA-1.E.G. ~ ⑦ SPA-SESS ~